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MEMORANDUM

TO: Department and Chapter Commanders and Adjutants

FROM: J. Marc Burgess
 National Adjutant

RE: **Sustaining Department and Chapter Operations during the Pandemic**

DATE: December 3, 2020

Over the course of the last nine months, National Commander Whitehead and I could not be more proud of the efforts of departments and chapters to ensure the vital and necessary business of our organization continues in your local communities. While most department conventions and conferences were cancelled during the last year, and so were the regular monthly meetings of chapters, the efforts of department and chapter executive committees have proven invaluable.

As a point of clarification for some, we all understand the *governing body* of each department is made up of chapter delegates assembled and voting during an annual department convention. The decisions made during the annual department convention guides the department until the next annual department convention convenes. Likewise, the *governing body* of each chapter consists of the members present and voting during a regular monthly meeting of the chapter.

DAV's *governing bodies* are not permitted to discuss and vote on issues "virtually" or remotely. All decisions of the *governing body* must be made in person as voting cannot be conducted by proxy or in absentia.

There are occasionally issues that require discussion and a decision between annual conventions of a department and the regular monthly meetings of a chapter. In all instances, those matters are to be discussed and considered by the executive committee of the entity. Unlike a *governing body*, the executive committee is in place to specifically address and vote on matters that require a decision following the adjournment of the *governing body* and the convening of the next meeting of such. Unlike the *governing body*, the executive committee is permitted to discuss and vote on issues electronically by way of email ballot, or virtually using online video conferencing platforms or teleconference calls.

Although the *governing body* of a department or chapter is not permitted to conduct official business of the entity virtually, we strongly encourage departments and chapters to embrace online virtual platforms to stay engaged with members and disseminate information related to the organization. We recently shared an example of how one chapter is successfully conducting online sessions in the May/June 2020 issue of *DAV Magazine* in the article titled, "*Adapt and Overcome*." These sessions have not only kept active DAV members engaged, but have also reintroduced the chapter to inactive members.

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